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ABSTRACT

The hypothesis tested in this study was that introspective writing will increase self-awareness and confidence in student teachers. Of particular interest was how such an exercise would change the student's perception of self, students, and the cooperating teacher with whom they were working. The test group was required to periodically write short autobiographical essays, reflections upon current experiences, and speculations on the possible future. A comparison was made at the end of the study between the test group and a control group. To some extent, the test group adapted somewhat less to their cooperating teachers than did students not exposed to the experiment. There was a slight shift from initial self-centeredness toward pupil-centeredness on the part of the test group. A few members of the test group decided not to go into teaching. It is suggested that reflective writing has possibilities as a tool for teacher education. (JD)

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THE EFFECT OF REFLECTIVE WRITING ON IDENTITY MAINTENANCE IN STUDENT TEACHERS

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"A living man, writer or not, always has something to say, as a contribution to the reality of the world in which his task is to declare himself" (Gusdorf, 1965, p. 70). As many writers have attested in interviews, autobiographies, and essays, the creative act of writing is inescapably an act of self-exploration and thus of self-awareness skill-building (Baumbauch, 1970). It would seem, then, that writing -- writing done out of one's own experience, feelings, and perceptions -- could be seen as a tool for building self-awareness within teacher training programs. Self-awareness skill-building, however, has not traditionally been a component of teacher training. Even those preparing to be teachers of the language arts, including literature and composition, do not experience writing as a regular part of their teacher-training, with the result that composition teachers themselves rarely write (Emig, 1971), and so are distanced from the composing tasks they set for their students.

In dealing with this problem, the researcher made use of the concept of reflective writing as a tool for building self-awareness. Reflective writing is defined as personal writing, arising out of the writer's feelings and perceptions of his or her experience. It is distinguished from expository writing by its greater subjectivity.

For the purposes of this study, the concept of reflective writing was broken down into three subdivisions: autobiographical writing, concerned with the person's perceptions of and feelings about his or her past; contemporary writing, concerned with the person's perceptions and feelings about what is happening to him in the present, during his or her actual student teaching experience; and speculative writing, concerned with the person's thoughts about his or her possible futures as a teacher.

This researcher felt that such an approach would, at least in part, answer Gordon Allport's challenge to researchers: "Imagination is needed to provide us with research methods appropriate to the pattern and growth of the single person" (1968, p. 108).

Research Questions

This study was intended to answer certain questions which could be raised in advance, as well as to discover other relationships which were not predicted. It was felt that both the answers and the further questions would suggest useful directions for future research.

The questions which this study was intended to explore were as follows:

1. Do secondary student teachers who are deliberately helped to develop self-awareness through reflective writing retain their identity more successfully--adapting less to the attitudes and values of their cooperating teachers--during the student teaching experience, than those not so helped?

2. What other variables seem to affect the amount of adaptation of the student teacher to the belief and attitude system of the cooperating teacher?

Research Questions (cont'd)

3. What role, if any, do such factors as choice of teaching field and personality traits (of the student teacher) play in determining the attitude of student teachers toward the seminar experience?

4. Do the contemporary writing tasks completed by the student teacher reflect the increase in self-confidence to be expected from Fuller's work with "stages of concern"?

5. Do the speculative writing tasks completed by the student teacher reflect a change in the student teacher's attitude about his or her own future in the teaching field?

Methodology

Design

The focus of the study was on the experience of two groups of teacher education students placed in student teaching assignments in secondary schools. The research design involved a treatment for one of the groups and no treatment for the other group, with pre- and post-tests administered to both groups and with the same instruments administered once to the cooperating teachers of both groups.

Group 1 served as the control group and consisted of two seminar sections of secondary student teachers. The subjects in this group attended regular weekly seminar sessions conducted by their university supervisors, but experienced no special exposure to reflective writing tasks.

Group 2, the experimental group, also consisted of two seminar sections of secondary student teachers. The subjects in this group attended regular weekly seminars conducted by their university supervisors, during which time

Design (cont'd)

special emphasis was given to reflective writing tasks of three types: autobiographical, contemporary, and speculative. The university supervisors explained to the students in these groups that the writing tasks would be in no way connected to their course grade or evaluation.

Other than the special stress on reflective writing in Group 2 and the personal seminar styles of the four university supervisors, the content of the seminars was approximately the same, consisting primarily of the traditional "rap-session" approach to the student teaching experience.

Subjects

Each group consisted of ten to twenty secondary student teachers. No randomization was possible with the resources available. The control group (N=11) consisted of a group of language arts student teachers and a group of social studies student teachers. The experimental group (N=17) consisted of a group of social studies student teachers and a group of music student teachers.

The cooperating teachers assigned to the students in each group were also part of the study. Generally, cooperating teachers identified as acceptable by the local school district are persons who have been public high school teachers for no less than three years and who are considered by school officials to be suitable role models for teacher trainees. For this study, it was not possible to make any special selection of cooperating teachers. It was necessary to assume that during the semester in which this study was conducted, the cooperating teachers who participated were reasonably typical.

Subjects (cont'd)

The students in Group 2 were told by their supervisors at the first seminar of the anticipated value of developing self-awareness skills and that the writing tasks were intended to help them develop such skills. To ensure that the university supervisors of the two groups which comprised the experimental group were giving much the same information and guidance about the writing tasks, a booklet was prepared, containing weekly instructions.

Each student had a folder in which his or her writing tasks were kept. These were retained by the researcher for analysis at the end of the semester, following the final session during which the researcher explained the study to the students and asked their permission to make use of the material in the folders.

Variables

The dependent variable (PCIA) consisted of the student teacher's post-test score on the Pupil Control Ideology, which reflects the student's classroom management style. This score was expected to shift, during the course of the semester, in the direction of the cooperating teacher's score on the same instrument. The researcher further expected that the experimental group scores would shift slightly less than those of the control group.

The independent variables for this study consisted of the following:

GROUP	whether the subject was in the experimental or the control group
AGE	subject's age
PW	whether or not the subject is in the habit of doing personal writing for pleasure

Variables (Cont'd)

BKS	number of books read per month for pleasure
DSB	pretest score on dogmatism scale
DSA	posttest score on dogmatism scale
IEB	pretest score on locus of control scale
IEA	posttest score on locus of control scale
TATT	subject's total attitude score on the attitude questionnaire given with the posttest
CTDS	cooperating teacher's dogmatism score
CTIE	cooperating teacher's locus of control score
CTPCI	cooperating teacher's pupil control ideology score
ATTSUP	student's score on a subscale of the attitude questionnaire dealing with the student's university supervisor and with the seminar
ATTCT	student's score on a subscale of the attitude questionnaire dealing with the student's cooperating teacher
PCIB	student's Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) pretest score

Instruments

Rokeach Dogmatism Scale

Rokeach (1960) proposed the personality dimension of open- versus closed-mindedness as more pervasive than authoritarianism, and developed the D-Scale to measure this trait. High scoring individuals are said to be "closed-minded" while low scorers are thought to be relatively flexible and open-minded. The scale is structure oriented rather than content oriented,

Rokeach Dogmatism Scale (Cont'd)

and avoids specific ideological content in order to tap structural aspects of openness and closedness. As Rokeach has observed, "Differences in functioning of open and closed persons extends not only to cognitive activities, but to emotional experiences as well" (1960, p. 289). It should therefore be of interest in relation to the subjective and emotional nature of the reflexive writing treatment being used in this study.

The scale's reported reliabilities range from .68 to .93, using both split-half and test-retest techniques with samples chosen from various populations. Data on the validity of the dogmatism scale have been provided through the use of the "method of known groups" in which subjects identified high and low dogmatic individuals among their acquaintances. Those identified as highly dogmatic indeed scored significantly above those identified as low-dogmatic on the Dogmatism Scale (Willower, Eidell, and Hoy, 1973).

I-E Locus of Control Scale

Rotter's Locus of Control Scale provides added information about the subject's perception of his world and and of his effectiveness in the world. After refinement and various tests for reliability and validity, the final instrument contained twenty-nine items in a forced-choice format. According to Rotter (1966), internal consistency estimates are relatively stable. Test-retest reliability seems fairly consistent for one month group administration, with a low r of .60 and a high of .83, and a series of studies described by Rotter pro-

I-E Locus of Control Scale (Cont'd)

vides evidence of construct validity. Of most interest to this researcher, however, is Rotter's claim that "the I-E scale appears to measure a psychological equivalent of the sociological concept of alienation in the sense of powerlessness" (1966, p. 20). This would seem to be closely related, one might speculate, to a construct like ego-strength and, possibly, to open-mindedness. It would be interesting to see whether feelings of powerlessness correlate with a tendency to display a rigid pupil control ideology, high dogmatism, low tolerance for self-exploration and self-awareness activities, choice of teaching field, and/or poor attitude toward the seminar experience as presently organized and conducted. Strong relationships that emerge in any of these relationships could point the way for future research and improvement of the student teaching experience.

Pupil Control Ideology (PCI)

The measure of attitudes chosen for use in this study was the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI), which relates custodial versus humanistic orientations of subjects to their attitudes about pupil control in the classroom. Willower, Eidell, and Hoy (1973) found that PCI scores correlate significantly with Rokeach Dogmatism scores; that is, the person who is closed-minded according to Rokeach is custodial on the PCI, and the person who is open-minded according to the D-Scale is humanistic on the PCI. Roberts and Blankenship (1970) found that student teachers become significantly more custodial during the student teaching experience. This is, therefore, a useful tool with which to measure the movement of student teacher attitudes towards those of their cooperating teachers.

Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) (Cont'd)

The theoretical range of scores on the PCI is 20 to 100; the higher the score, the more custodial the subject. Reliability of the PCI has been calculated using the split-half technique. A reliability coefficient was calculated by correlating even-item subscores with odd-item subscores. The resulting Pearson product-moment coefficient was .91 and application of the Spearman-Brown formula yielded a corrected coefficient of .95. In further tests for reliability, coefficients were .83 and .91. The PCI Form seems to be a relatively reliable measure of educators' pupil-control ideology.

The validity of the PCI was established using several procedures, the primary one of which was based upon principals' judgments concerning the pupil control ideology of certain of their teachers. A t value of 2.639 was found, which was significant at the .01 level. A later cross-validation using the same technique produced a t value of 3.418, significant at the .001 level. By most standards, the PCI seems to be both reliable and valid.

Two other attitude inventories were considered for use in this study and rejected. The Educational Preference Scale (EPS) was found to be unavailable (Lacefield and Cole, 1972); the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory (MTAI) is more time-consuming than was convenient for the purposes of this study (150 items).

Attitude Questionnaire

To obtain further information about the subjects' perceptions of their student

teaching experiences, the researcher designed a twenty-three item questionnaire. Despite Jourard's warning that "a questionnaire always remains a record of what a person is willing to let an experimenter know about him" (1971, p. 102), it was felt that some sort of brief survey would be a useful supplement to the other data, particularly in areas not explicitly addressed by either the instruments or the writing tasks. Specifically, the attitude questionnaire addressed itself to the students' perceptions of their relationships with their supervising teacher and their cooperating teacher; their happiness or unhappiness with certain elements of their experience, such as the weekly seminar; and whether or not they still intended to pursue a teaching career.

The scale was designed using a six-point Likert format. For scoring purposes, the negatively worded items were reversed, and a total attitude score (TATT) was computed for each student. The highest possible score was 138; the lowest possible, 23. The mean for all subjects in both groups was 86.5926 (N=28).

Factor analysis of the twenty-three items revealed the existence of two factors, as expected. Sixteen items loaded on Factor 1; these were the items concerning the subjects' attitudes towards the supervising teacher and the seminar. This subscale was identified as a variable by the term ATTSUP. Six items loaded on Factor 2; these were the items exploring the subjects' feelings about their cooperating teachers. This subscale was identified as ATTCT.

Treatment of Data

Three Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) were computed to determine, respectively, the relationships (if any) of Total Attitude Score (TATT) to Group (experimental, control); of the subscale ATTSUP to Group; and of the subscale ATTCT to Group.

Analysis of Covariance was used to determine the relationship of the PCIA (posttest score on the Pupil Control Ideology) to Group (experimental, control), after controlling for the effect of the PCIB (pretest score on the PCI).

Finally, Multiple Regression was used to determine the variable or variables that would be the best predictors of the posttest score on the PCI, as well as to determine the intercorrelations of all the variables.

In addition to these quantitative data, the study also yielded a wealth of essentially nonquantifiable data in the form of the content of the reflective writing done by the subjects in the experimental group. Some of these qualitative data will be discussed in the section on the findings of the study.

Limitations of the Study

1. Considering that the subjects had had no particular exposure to the concept of reflective writing as an essential component of teacher preparation prior to this study, it was expected that the amount of time available (one semester) would not be long enough to get the subjects genuinely involved with the reflective writing.

2. The fact that the subjects were not all preparing to teach the same subject may be considered a limitation if one is concerned with maximum control. However, it was found that some differences between the groups might be due to relationships between personality factors and choice of teaching subject. This lent an added dimension to the interpretation of the data and suggested ideas for future research.

Limitations of the Study (Cont'd)

3. Generalizations from the findings must be extremely limited because of the small sample size. Data of student teachers whose cooperating teachers failed to return their instrument packages had to be eliminated; for this reason the original N of 38 dropped to 28.

Findings

Robert L. Ebel, past president of the American Educational Research Association, has pointed out that "the variables we ordinarily work with in education are so global and encompass such a diversity of specifics as to defy precise definition and exact quantification" (Ebel, 1967, p. 82). This was certainly found to be true in this study, particularly in the content of the actual writing done by students in the experimental group. We must also bear the limitations of the study in mind, especially the small N and the short duration of the treatment. Nevertheless, the findings are of interest for their heuristic value and for the suggestions which they yield concerning possible directions for future research.

Briefly stated, the questions which this study was designed to explore were:

1. Do secondary student teachers who are deliberately helped to develop self-awareness through reflective writing retain their identity more successfully, adapting less to the attitudes and values of their cooperating teachers during the student teaching experience, than those not so helped?

2. What other variables seem to affect the amount of adaptation of the student teacher to the belief and attitude system of the cooperating teacher?

3. What role, if any, do such factors as choice of teaching subject and personality traits play in determining the attitude of student teachers toward the seminar experience?

Findings (Cont'd)

4. Do the contemporary writing tasks completed by the student teachers reflect the shift in self-confidence to be expected from Fuller's work with "Stages of concern"?

5. Do the speculative writing tasks completed by the student teacher reflect a shift in attitude toward his or her own possible future in the teaching field?

Each of these questions will be considered in turn. First, did the students in the experimental group adapt less to the attitudes and values of their cooperating teachers, as measured by their scores on the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI)?

Both groups became more custodial during the course of the student teaching experience, and both moved in the direction of the cooperating teachers' scores, with the control group even surpassing their cooperating teachers. In fact, the experimental group did shift a little less, rising 3.47 points compared to the control group rise of 3.9 points. The difference is so slight as to be more or less negligible, however. This was confirmed statistically by analysis of covariance, which revealed no significant effect of treatment on the student's PCI posttest score, after controlling for the effect of the student's PCI pretest score (Table 1). This researcher feels that this finding does not necessarily reflect negatively on the value of reflective writing as a component of teacher education, however. It may be that, if implemented within an integrated, year-long teacher preparation program, it might indeed make a significant difference; three months was hardly enough time.

TABLE 1.

ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE TO DETERMINE THE EFFECT OF TREATMENT ON THE STUDENT'S PCI POSTTEST SCORE, AFTER CONTROLLING FOR THE PCI PRETEST SCORE

SOURCE	DF	F	SIGNIFICANCE OF F
Covariate			
PCI Pretest	1	26.932	0.001
Main Effect			
Group	1	.014	0.999
Residual	25	39.645	
Total	27	76.275	

Next, what other variables affected the students' adaptation to the attitudes and values of their cooperating teachers? A multiple regression analysis yields the information shown in Table 2.

It is interesting to note that the PCI pretest score (PCIB) is not the best predictor of the posttest score; rather, both the Rokeach Dogmatism posttest score (DSA) and the Rotter Locus of Control posttest score (IEA) are stronger predictors, with the PCIB dropping to third place. This seems to indicate that some shifts that take place in both dogmatism and internality are important to the shift that takes place in pupil control ideology; it might be interesting to pursue this line of inquiry further at a later time.

Despite the fact that a correlation matrix revealed no significant relationship between the PCIA and the number of books read by the student per month for pleasure (BKS), the variable BKS shows up on this stepwise regression list as the fourth contributor to the student's PCIA. The researcher is at a loss to account for this statistic.

TABLE 2.

RESULTS OF MULTIPLE REGRESSION TO DETERMINE BEST PREDICTORS OF PCI POSTTEST SCORE

STEP	VARIABLE	MULTIPLE R	F
1	DSA: Dogmatism Posttest Score	.72446	27.61424
2	IEA: Locus of Control Post-test Score	.83201	26.99235
3	PCIB: Pupil Control Ideology Pretest Score	.85686	21.17751
4	BKS: Number of books read per month for pleasure	.88210	19.28537
5	ATTCT: Attitude toward co-operating teacher (subscore)	.89106	16.18756

The fifth variable on the regression list, ATTCT or the student's attitude toward his or her cooperating teacher, is more plausible. The student teacher's attitude toward classroom management might well be related, at an emotional level, to his feelings about his cooperating teacher.

Third, can any relationships be seen between the student teacher's personality and choice of teaching field and his attitudes towards his overall student teaching experience? In this study, this question yielded the most interesting information. First of all, it must be borne in mind that the two groups -- experimental and control -- were each composed of two groups of student teachers; in other words, four groups of student teachers were involved in the study.

Group I -- Control

1. Social Studies (N=7)
2. Language Arts (N=4)

Group II -- Experimental

3. Social Studies (N=8)
4. Music (N=9)

Most of the student teachers of Group 4 were preparing to become high school band directors. They were highly competitive and performance-oriented; they admired strict discipline; and they seemed to have very definite ideas. These characteristics, revealed in the writing which they did for this study, seem to be consistent with the rigidity which was revealed by their various test scores. The music student teachers and their cooperating teachers were the most custodial of the four groups on the PCI, the most dogmatic of the four groups on the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, and Group 4 student teachers had the lowest, or most negative attitude scores on the Attitude Questionnaire, as Tables 3, 4, and 5 show.

TABLE 3

PUPIL CONTROL IDEOLOGY SCORES BY GROUP

GROUP	N	PCIB	PCIA	CTPCI
1	7	51.14	56.857	50.71
2	4	50.0	50.75	58.5
3	8	50.13	52.75	54.375
4	9	55.88	60.11	63.44

TABLE 4

DOGMATISM SCORES BY GROUP

GROUP	N	DSB	DSA	CTDS
1	7	120.14	123.71	99.857
2	4	107.50	109.25	120.750
3	8	127.375	125.75	118.625
4	9	140.0	145.88	132.666

Clearly, there is some linkage here between personality, choice of teaching field, dogmatism, and custodial classroom management preference. It seems that people who choose to become high school band directors display certain characteristic personality traits that distinguish them from people who choose to teach in other fields. A literature search revealed no research either confirming or disproving this conclusion. This, therefore, may be an area deserving further study.

TABLE 5

ATTITUDE SCORES BY GROUP

GROUP	MEAN ATTITUDE SCORE[a]
Control	
1	94.4
2	108.0
Experimental	
3	92.5
4	64.2

[a] Lower score = more negative attitude

That students who were the most dogmatic and custodial should also have the most negative attitudes towards their student teaching experience in general and towards their supervising teacher in particular is not surprising in view of research done in 1969 by Musella. In that study, it was found that dogmatic student teachers rate supervising teachers lower than do more open-minded student teachers.

Intercorrelations between the variables in this study reveal a high negative relationship, significant at the .05 level, between the variables GROUP and ATTSUP (-.42258). The latter, it will be remembered, is the student's score on the attitude subscale dealing with the supervising teacher. A significantly high relationship was also found between the student's total attitude score (TATT) and GROUP (-.59679 , significant at the .01 level). Evidently, the higher group (4) had the lower attitude score. This statistic supports the information suggested by Table 5.

That Group 4, the music student teachers, had distinctive characteristics seems clearly indicated by this study. Close scrutiny of Tables 3, 4 and 5, however, reveals that Group 2 -- the language arts student teachers -- also had some distinctive characteristics. For example, whereas Groups 1, 3, and 4 shifted from between 2.6 to 5.7 points on the PCI, Group 2 shifted virtually not at all (only .75 of a point). In other words, the language arts student teachers did not get much more custodial during the course of their student teaching semester than they were before it began. In addition, Table 5 shows that Group 2 had by far the most positive attitude towards the student teaching experience, and Table 4 reveals that Group 2 had the lowest dogmatism level of the four groups.

Evidently some generalizations can be made about students who become language arts teachers. However, in this case, since the N was so low (only 4), generalizations would be extremely unwise. Conducting this study or one very similar to it with much larger Ns would perhaps be worthwhile, particularly for researchers who might be interested in personality as related to choice of teaching field.

Do the contemporary writing tasks completed by the student teachers reflect the increase of self-confidence to be expected from Fuller's work with "stages of concern"? This questions could not be fully answered by this research design, because each student completed only three "contemporary" writing tasks.* That was not sufficient for patterns to reveal themselves in a clear manner. However,

* In addition to 3 "autobiographical" and 2 "speculative" writing tasks.

two representative quotes reveal that at least some of the student teachers seemed to move from initial self-centeredness towards pupil-centeredness:

Fourth week: "I'm not always sure of where I stand -- not sure of what he expects of me."

Sixth week: "I also wonder if it is wrong for me to worry (care) too much about the kids and their attitude . . ."

While the amount of writing collected was insufficient to fully answer this question, evidence of increased self-confidence can be seen in the slight shift towards internality in the Locus of Control scores (IEB, IEA) of both groups:

TABLE 6

LOCUS OF CONTROL SCORES BY GROUP

GROUP	N	IEB	IEA	CTIE
Control	11	10.0	9.72	9.81
Experimental	17	10.17	8.7	7.58

Did the speculative writing tasks completed by the student teacher reflect a change in attitude toward his or her own possible future as a teacher? In other words, did the student teaching experience lead the student to decide not to go into teaching after all, or to be a different kind of teacher than at first envisioned?

Several of those who at first had pictured themselves as being warm,

supportive friends of their pupils decided that view had been a little unrealistic:

> "I have reconsidered the fact of being a helping friend to the students and decided perhaps a steady, friendly but firm approach is a better idea . . . ."

Six of the seventeen admitted, in the final writing task, that they had decided not to go into teaching. Over half of the seventeen indicated that they would do things differently than they had originally thought; and nearly two-thirds mentioned feeling very frustrated at not having had an opportunity to try out some of their own ideas during their student teaching. About one-fourth specifically stated feeling a need to learn more about teaching, or about their subject, before starting to teach full time. The feelings revealed in these papers support what is known about the socializing effect of the student teaching experience. This researcher feels that if the students involved in this study had experienced a less traditional program, one with more emphasis on self-understanding, different findings might have emerged. For example, the attitudinal changes about teaching as a career that would perhaps take place over a full year and a half would be more meaningtul not only for the researcher, but indeed to the student himself.

Generally speaking, this study indicated that reflective thinking and writing about oneself was an unfamiliar activity for most of the students, especially when connected to "school work," and to teacher preparation. This was not surprising, in view of the fact that reflective self-awareness has not, historically, been part of teacher education programs. This suggests that reflective thinking and the

desire for self-knowledge are part of an attitude to a program that places a high value on such activity. The literature about attitudinal change seems to indicate that such change takes time; therefore, if reflective thinking is to be an important part of a teacher education program students should be introduced to such activity right at the very beginning of teacher training, and it should be incorporated into every aspect of their program, right through to the end.

This study was conducted with student teachers who had not had such exposure. Rather, they had proceeded through a more or less traditional program of secondary education courses. Given that background, the extent to which they were even willing to engage in reflective activities, specifically reflective writing, varied.

As we have seen, both the student teachers and the cooperating teachers of Group 4 were by far the most custodial and the most dogmatic of the four groups, and the Group 4 student teachers were the most negative in their attitudes towards the student teaching experience. In addition, the student teachers of Group 4 were uncomfortable with the reflective writing tasks, and three of the nine in that group were openly hostile towards both the writing task and the weekly seminars in general. The writing which they did complete was often short and sometimes superficial. The average length of each task for this group was .768 of a page, as compared to 1.294 pages for Group 3. Group 4 consistently wrote less than Group 3. It is possible that the personality traits of those attracted

to careers as high school band directors were again involved here. It may also be that students who have chosen to become high school social studies teachers are more comfortable with expressing themselves in words than are music students.

Summary

In this study, we have seen that student teachers who were exposed to reflective writing activities adapted somewhat less to their cooperating teachers than did students not so exposed, but because of the limitations of the study, it is impossible to claim that the reflective writing tasks themselves were in fact what made the difference. Additionally, the difference itself was very small.

We also saw that the student's choice of teaching field seems to be significantly related in a number of ways to dimensions of his personality as well as to his attitudes about the student teaching experience. This was shown to have been especially true of the music and language arts student teachers.

The content of the writing tasks, although not quantified for statistical analysis, revealed a slight trend in the direction suggested by Fuller, namely, away from self-concern and towards concern for the pupils. A trend towards increased realism about what it takes to be a high school teacher was also discerned in the writings.

Overall, however, the results of this study imply that there was not enough time involved. Reflective writing is a highly personal matter, or should be; and for students who have not experienced it as a valued part of their education, it takes time to become comfortable with such introspection.

Summary (Cont'd)

It is the feeling of this writer that reflective writing and other self-awareness activities should be part of the professional preparation of all teachers, preferably integrated into every aspect of their program from start to finish. Students who experienced such a program would be even more likely than those in the study just described to maintain their own sense of identity and to resist the pressure to become carbon copies of their cooperating teachers during their student teaching term.

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